

Wisconsin DNR Elk Advisory Committee

Monday, October 1, 2018 9:30 AM
DNR Eau Claire Office – Eau Claire, WI

Members Present:

Kevin Wallenfang, *WDNR Wildlife Management Big Game Ecologist – Committee Chair*
Kurt Flack, *Regional Director, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation*
Dan Eklund, *USFS Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest Wildlife Biologist*
Rich Kirchmeyer, *Wisconsin Bowhunters Association*
Laine Stowell, *WDNR Sawyer County/Clam Lake Elk Biologist*
Tony Blattler, *Wisconsin Conservation Congress*
Travis Bartnick, *GLIFWC Wildlife Biologist*
Jess Carstens, *WDNR Natural Resources Area Supervisor*
Scott Roepke, *WDNR Jackson and Clark County/Black River Elk Biologist*
Lindsey Long, *WDNR State Wildlife Veterinarian*
Kurt Haas, *WDNR Jackson County Conservation Warden*
Nelson Smith, *Ho-Chunk Nation Wildlife Biologist*
Kevyn Quamme, *Wisconsin Wildlife Federation*
Pat Beringer, *WDNR Upper Chippewa Area Wildlife Supervisor*
Jon Schweitzer, *Jackson County Forestry & Parks*

Members Absent:

Tim Ginnett, *UW-SP, Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs*
Greg Mitchell, *WDNR Natural Resources Area Supervisor*
Tami Ryan, *WDNR Wildlife Health Section Chief*

Guests Present:

Anna Brose, *WDNR Assistant Big Game Ecologist*
Megan, *WDNR Wildlife Technician*
Jen Neelands, *PhD Candidate, UW-Madison*
Al Jacobson, *Jackson County Wildlife Fund*

Herd Updates

Black River Falls Elk Herd Update (Scott Roepke)

- 10 of approximately 16 calves collared in spring of 2018
- Population estimate as of Oct. 1: 65 elk
- A number of deployed collars have failed before anticipated

Clam Lake Elk Herd Update (Laine Stowell)

- 19 calves born from 23 GPS collared cows, caught 10 of those calves in the spring of 2018
- Over 450 volunteers signed up to search for calves
- 87 radio collared elk in the CLER
- Established 13 acres of forest openings this year, across 8 new openings
- Population estimate: 210 – 220 elk, minus any lost to hunting (3 to date)

Research and winter trapping needs

- Clam Lake Range: plan to capture 20-30 uncollared elk or elk with old collars in the expanded range of the Clam Lake Elk Range to fit with GPS collars
 - Will need 10-14 additional calf collars for spring 2019
- Black River Range: about 24 elk without collars or with non-working collars, plans to trap through January and February of 2019, targeting cow-calf groups first before trapping bulls
 - 2 new corral traps purchased last year
 - Anticipate that about 15 collars will be available for deployment

Discussion on continued collared failures

- May be able to use money from elk hunt application fees to purchase collars
 - Kevin Wallenfang to talk to DNR administration and legal services and regroup with Scott Roepke, Laine Stowell, Dan Storm on collar purchasing
 - Kevin Wallenfang to set up conference call with Scott Roepke, Laine Stowell, Dan Storm to further discuss research needs

Trail camera monitoring

- Volunteers maintaining cameras have been plentiful
- Gaps in camera monitoring identified in the last 2 years have been filled in

Elk hunt update

- Tribal hunt (Travis Bartnick)
 - 3 bull elk harvested to date
 - 10 participating tribes formed intertribal hunting groups
 - tribal elk hunter orientation took place on September 22, 2018 with about 40 hunters in attendance
 - Tribal ceremony being held on LCO this upcoming Friday, remaining hunting groups likely to hunt this weekend after the ceremony
 - Travis Bartnick to send Kevin Wallenfang the contact information for GLIFWC's public information officer and pictures from the hunts
- State hunt (Kevin Wallenfang)
 - Held state elk hunter orientation on September 6th with all 5 hunters in attendance
 - Hunt opens October 13th

Kentucky Elk Reintroduction 2019

- Will use a contracted professional helicopter crew to capture elk this year
- Capture will start as early as January 7, 2019

Discussion on the release of elk captured in Kentucky in 2019

- There is desire to bring a small number (5-10) more elk to BLER
- Committee decision is for the chair to advance the idea to DNR administration. If approved, a decision on the actual number would occur at the March meeting of this committee. A decision was made by the committee to limit the number to no more than 10

Elk Management Plan

- Elk opinion survey is currently out, and we are starting to get responses
- Expectations are to have the plan completed before 2021

Elk hunt quota setting

- Rule to change quota setting based on 5% of the population and population thresholds to initiate a hunt was recently approved by the NRB
- Elk hunting quotas will now have to be reviewed and approved by the NRB annually

Partner Updates:

- GLIFWC: none
- USFS: none
- Ho-Chunk: none
- Jackson County Forestry and Parks: none
- Wisconsin Wildlife Federation: none
- Wisconsin Bowhunters: none
- DNR Law Enforcement: none
- RMEF: Allocated PAC money a few weeks ago, still going through final approvals in Missoula

Adjourn 12:30pm